

Message Text

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S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 3 VIENNA 9953

LIMDIS/NOFORN

FROM US REP MBFR

EO: 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM NATO

SUBJ: MBFR: WESTERN EUROPEAN DEFENSE COOPERATION AND THE MBFR
NEGOTIATIONS

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: RENEWED DISCUSSION IN WESTERN EUROPEAN CAPITALS ON THE ISSUE OF POSSIBLE WESTERN EUROPEAN DEFENSE COOPERATION HAS COINCIDED WITH THE OPENING OF THE MBFR SUBSTANTIVE NEGOTIATIONS IN VIENNA. AS A RESULT, THIS ISSUE HAS ALREADY TAKEN ON A CERTAIN PROMINANCE IN THE VIENNA TALKS. WESTERN EUROPEAN STATEMENTS HAVE ELICITED SOVIET QUESTIONS AND STATEMENTS WHICH HAVE IN TURN LED TO FURTHER WESTERN EUROPEAN STATEMENTS IN A MUTUALLY REINFORCING PROCESS. UNLESS THE PRESENT TENDENCY IS CHECKED, THERE IS SOME RISK THAT THE ISSUE OF EUROPEAN DEFENSE COOPERATION COULD BECOME A CENTRAL FOCUS OF THE MBFR NEGOTIATIONS, BLOCKING THE ROAD TO DETAILED DISCUSSION OF OTHER ISSUES. THE MOST EFFECTIVE WAY OF AVOIDING THIS OUTCOME WOULD APPEAR TO BE TO SEEK TO MOVE THE VIENNA DISCUSSION INTO DETAILED CONSIDERATION OF SOME SPECIFIC AS-

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PECT OF THE WESTERN NEGOTIATING POSITION, PREFERABLY US/SOVIET

FORCE REDUCTIONS. END SUMMARY.

2. SEVERAL MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS OVER THE LAST TWO YEARS, AMONG THEM THE ONSET OF THE MBFR NEGOTIATIONS, HAVE PRECIPITATED A MARKED INCREASE IN INTEREST IN DEFENSE COOPERATION AMONG MEMBERS OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY. FROM THE VIEWPOINT OF WESTERN EUROPEAN ATTITUDES, LEAVING ASIDE THE CRUCIAL QUESTION OF WHAT WILL ACTUALLY BE DONE OR ACHIEVED, THERE APPEARS NOW MORE DISCUSSION OF THIS ISSUE THAN AT ANY TIME SINCE THE DISCUSSION OF THE EDC IN THE EARLY 1950'S.

3. THE TREND TOWARD MORE ACTIVE CONSIDERATION OF DEFENSE COOPERATION AMONG THE EC NINE HAS COINCIDED WITH PREPARATIONS FOR THE BEGINNING OF MBFR SUBSTANTIVE NEGOTIATIONS AND THEIR ACTUAL BEGINNING IN VIENNA. AGAINST THE BACKGROUND OF RENEWED INTEREST IN THEIR CAPITALS IN THE POSSIBILITY OF WESTERN EUROPEAN DEFENSE COOPERATION, EUROPEAN COMMUNITY MEMBERS OF NATO GAINED ALLIANCE AGREEMENT IN BRUSSELS TO INCLUSION OF A POINT IN THE AGREED ALLIANCE PAPER ON MBFR THAT "NEITHER THE CONDUCT NOR THE OUTCOME OF MBFR NEGOTIATIONS SHOULD BE ALLOWED TO INHIBIT THE AGREED PROGRAMME FOR THE CREATION BY A EUROPEAN UNION OR THE GROWTH OF EUROPEAN DEFENSE COOPERATION," AND OF SEVERAL OTHER POINTS BEARING ON THE NEED TO PROTECT THE POTENTIALITY FOR WESTERN EUROPEAN DEFENSE COOPERATION.

4. ONCE ARRIVED IN VIENNA, REPRESENTATIVES OF THE UK, NETHERLANDS, ITALY AND BELGIUM TOOK THE LEAD IN EMPHASIZING THE THEME TO THE EAST THAT THE MBFR NEGOTIATIONS AND POSSIBLE MBFR AGREEMENTS SHOULD NOT LIMIT OR RESTRICT THE POSSIBILITY OF EUROPEAN COOPERATION, INCLUDING COOPERATION IN DEFENSE. SPECIFICALLY, SOON AFTER THE AD HOC GROUP TOOK UP ITS WORK IN VIENNA, THESE REPRESENTATIVES INSISTED ON INCLUSION OF A POINT IN THE OPENING STATEMENTS OF ALL EUROPEAN COMMUNITY MEMBERS AT THE VIENNA NEGOTIATIONS THAT MBFR AGREEMENTS SHOULD NOT INHIBIT WESTERN EUROPEAN COOPERATION, EFFECTIVELY SILENCING THE RESERVATIONS OF THE DANISH REP AS TO THE WISDOM OF FREQUENT REFERENCES BY THE WEST TO THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY. THEY ALSO INSISTED ON REPETITION OF THIS POINT IN SUBSEQUENT PRESENTATIONS TO THE EAST IN PLENARY SESSIONS OF THE NEGOTIATIONS MADE IN THE NAME OF THE ALLIES AND HAVE STRESSED THE TOPIC IN BILATERAL DISCUSSIONS WITH THE SOVIETS AND

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EASTERN EUROPEANS. WITHIN THE AD HOC GROUP, THESE REPRESENTATIVES HAVE AGAIN AND AGAIN BROUGHT DISCUSSION BACK TO THE ISSUE OF THE POTENTIAL EFFECT OF SOVIET AND EASTERN EUROPEAN PROPOSALS ON POSSIBLE EUROPEAN DEFENSE COOPERATION.

5. EUROPEAN COMMUNITY MEMBERS OF THE AD HOC GROUP HAVE IN ADDITION INSISTED ON PLAYING UP THE EUROPEAN THEME IN REPORTS TO NATO, WITH A STRESS ON EASTERN EFFORTS TO IMPOSE INDIVIDUAL SUB-CEIL-

INGS ON EUROPEAN NATIONAL FORCES AND THE NEED TO RESIST THESE EFFORTS FINALLY, THE EC REPRESENTATIVES IN THE AD HOC GROUP HAVE BEGUN MEETING TOGETHER IN VIENNA TO DISCUSS HOW BEST TO PROTECT THE POSSIBILITY OF WESTERN EUROPEAN DEFENSE COOPERATION DURING THE MBFR NEGOTIATIONS AND HAVE INDICATED THAT THEY INTEND TO MAKE A PRACTICE OF THESE MEETINGS.

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LIMDIS/NOFORN

FROM US REP MBFR

6. WITH REGARD TO EFFECTS WITHIN THE AD HOC GROUP ITSELF, THE CUMULATIVE RESULT ON THE NATO ALLIES OF THIS CONTINUED EMPHASIS ON THE POTENTIAL NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF MBFR ON POSSIBLE WESTERN EUROPEAN DEFENSE COOPERATION HAS BEEN THAT, AMONG THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY MEMBERS OF THE AD HOC GROUP IN VIENNA, ALL EXCEPT THE FEDERAL GERMANS AND THE DANES, WHO DO NOT PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN VIENNA, SEEM AT PRESENT TO BE PAYING SOMEWHAT MORE ATTENTION TO LIMITATION OF POSSIBLE DAMAGE TO WESTERN EUROPEAN INTERESTS THAN TO ACHIEVING THE GOALS OF THE NEGOTIATIONS.

7. WITH REGARD TO EASTERN REACTIONS, IT CAN BE ASSUMED THAT THE INDICATIONS FROM WESTERN EUROPEAN CAPITALS OF RENEWED INTEREST IN

WESTERN EUROPEAN DEFENSE COOPERATION WERE FOLLOWED WITH CLOSEST INTEREST IN MOSCOW. ONCE THE MBFR TALKS STARTED, ACTUAL SOVIET BEHAVIOR IN VIENNA REINFORCED THE SPECULATION OF MANY WESTERN ANALYSTS THAT A MAJOR SOVIET MOTIVATION IN PARTICIPATING IN MBFR NEGOTIATIONS WAS TO GAIN SOME HOLD OVER FUTURE DEFENSE ACTIVITIES OF AN EMERGING EUROPEAN COMMUNITY. SOVIET REPRESENTATIVES IN
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VIENNA ASKED WITH INCREASING INTENSITY ABOUT THE UNDERLYING SIGNIFICANCE OF STATEMENTS BY NATO MEMBERS OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY THAT THE MBFR NEGOTIATIONS SHOULD NOT INHIBIT FUTURE EUROPEAN COOPERATION. THEY HAVE ASKED WHETHER THESE STATEMENTS REFERRED TO THE DEFENSE FIELD AND ABOUT THE NATURE OF WESTERN EUROPEAN PLANNING FOR DEFENSE COOPERATION.

8. MORE SPECIFICALLY, DISCUSSION IN VIENNA OF THE SUBJECT OF WESTERN EUROPEAN DEFENSE HAS VISIBLY INCREASED SOVIET INTEREST, ALREADY STRONG, IN OBTAINING ALLIED AGREEMENT TO REDUCTION OF WESTERN EUROPEAN NATIONAL FORCES, ESPECIALLY THE BUNDESWEHR. THE SOVIETS ALSO HAVE EXPRESSED INTEREST IN REDUCTIONS OF UK AND OTHER EUROPEAN COMMUNITY FORCES. ONE SOVIET REPRESENTATIVE EXPLICITLY TOLD US THAT THE SOVIETS WERE INTERESTED IN LIMITING WESTERN EUROPEAN DEFENSE COOPERATION THROUGH THE MBFR NEGOTIATIONS. FROM THE SOVIET VIEWPOINT, AS FROM THE WEST EUROPEAN, THE QUESTION OF WHETHER NATIONAL FORCES SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN THE NEGOTIATIONS FROM THE OUTSET, INCLUSION OF THE BUNDESWEHR, AND THE ISSUE OF WESTERN EUROPEAN DEFENSE COOPERATION ARE ALL ASPECTS OF A SINGLE SUBJECT.

9. THIS ACCOUNT SHOWS THAT WESTERN EUROPEAN AND WARSAW PACT EXPRESSIONS OF INTERESTS IN THE SUBJECT OF WESTERN EUROPEAN DEFENSE COOPERATION HAVE BEEN MUTUALLY REINFORCING. THIS PROCESS IS LIKELY TO CONTINUE. THE MBFR NEGOTIATIONS IN VIENNA HAVE BEEN UNDERWAY FOR ONLY A MONTH. HOWEVER, SUFFICIENT EVIDENCE HAS ALREADY ACCUMULATED TO INDICATE THAT THE ISSUE OF POSSIBLE WESTERN EUROPEAN DEFENSE COOPERATION HAS ALREADY BECOME ONE OF THE PREDOMINANT THEMES OF THE MBFR NEGOTIATIONS AND COULD IN TIME BECOME THEIR CENTRAL FOCUS.

10. IT IS IMPORTANT TO REFLECT ON THE POTENTIAL CONSEQUENCES OF THIS TREND. THE INCREASE IN THE ATTENTION OF MEMBERS OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY TO THE POSSIBILITY OF DEFENSE COOPERATION AMONG THEMSELVES MAY NOT BE SUFFICIENT TO RESULT IN REAL MOVEMENT AT THIS TIME TOWARD SUCH COOPERATION. HOWEVER, THE CONTINUATION OF THE DIALOGUE ON THE TOPIC IN WESTERN EUROPEAN CAPITALS AND ITS REFLECTION IN VIENNA MAY BE SUFFICIENTLY INTENSE TO HAVE THE EFFECT OF CAUSING THE MBFR NEGOTIATIONS TO FOCUS ON THIS ISSUE. IN SUCH AN EVENT, CONTINUING INDICATIONS OF SOVIET INTEREST IN USING THE MBFR NEGOTIATIONS TO GAIN A HOLD OVER WESTERN EUROPEAN DEFENSE
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COOPERATION MIGHT IN THE EXTREME CASE FINALLY RESULT IN A CONCLUSION ON THE PART OF THOSE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY MEMBERS WHO ARE DIRECT PARTICIPANTS IN THE MBFR NEGOTIATIONS THAT IT WOULD BE BETTER TO SEEK TO DEAL WITH DOMESTIC POLITICAL PRESSURES FOR A REDUCTION OF US AND THEIR OWN FORCES OUTSIDE OF THE FRAMEWORK OF THE MBFR NEGOTIATIONS, RATHER THAN TO UNDERTAKE COMMITMENTS VIS-A-VIS THE SOVIET UNION ABOUT FORCE LEVELS, WHICH, WHILE NOT BURDENSOME AT PRESENT, COULD HAVE NEGATIVE IMPACT IN THE FUTURE.

11. SUCH A CONCLUSION OBY EUROPEAN COMMUNITY MEMBERS COULD IN TURN JEOPARDIZE THE CHANCES OF OBTAINING SOVIET AGREEMENT EVEN TO A FIRST PHASE OF NEGOTIATION AS NOW CONTEMPLATED BY THE ALLIES. THE SOVIETS MIGHT WELL CONCLUDE THAT THERE IS NO REASON FOR THEM TO UNDERTAKE LARGER CUTS THAN THE U.S. IF THERE WAS NO PROSPECT OF COVERAGE OF THE BUNDESWEHR AND OTHER EUROPEAN FORCES.

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FROM US REP MBFR

12. SUCH AN OUTCOME IS FAR OFF AND STILL IN THE REALM OF THE THEORETICAL. MOREOVER, SOVIET INTEREST IN CONTROLLING THE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF WESTERN EUROPEAN DEFENSE COOPERATION CAN BE A POSITIVE ASSET FOR THE WEST IN THE MBFR NEGOTIATIONS TO THE EXTENT THAT IT CAN BE CHANNELLED INTO ACCEPTABLE FORMS AND EXPLOITED IN THE DIRECTION OF BRINGING THE SOVIETS TO SEE THAT THE ONLY PRACTICABLE WAY OF ACHIEVING EVEN PART OF THEIR AIMS IS TO ACCEPT THE ALLIED APPROACH TO THE COMMON CEILING AND THE TWO-PHASE NEGOTIATION.

13. HOWEVER, ANOTHER NEGATIVE OUTCOME, MORE IMMINENT THAN THE HYPOTHETICAL POSSIBILITY OF FUTURE BREAKDOWN OF THE MBFR NEGOTIATIONS OVER THE EUROPEAN ISSUE, MIGHT BE A SITUATION WHERE THE FORWARD PROGRESS OF THOSE NEGOTIATIONS WAS BLOCKED BY DISPUTES BETWEEN THE NATO ALLIES AND
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THE SOVIETS ABOUT THE EVENTUAL COVERAGE OF THE BUNDESWEHR AND UK, NETHERLANDS, BELGIUM, LUXEMBOURG -- AND ALSO FRENCH FORCES. THIS SITUATION IS WELL WITHIN THE REALM OF PRACTICAL POSSIBILITY: THE MORE THE WESTERN EUROPEANS TALK ABOUT THE NEED TO MAINTAIN FREEDOM FOR FUTURE DEFENSE COOPERATION, THE MORE THE SOVIETS WILL INSIST IN RETURN ON OBTAINING SPECIFIC AND DETAILED ALLIED COMMITMENTS WITH REGARD TO COVERAGE OF THE BUNDESWEHR AND OTHER WESTERN EUROPEAN FORCES. IN TURN, THE MORE THE SOVIETS INSIST ON SUCH COVERAGE, THE MORE THE WESTERN EUROPEANS WILL TEND TO INSIST ON NOT TAKING ANY STEPS WHICH WOULD IMPLY A COMMITMENT ON THEIR PART. IN THIS SENSE, WESTERN EUROPEAN REPRESENTATIVES HAVE ALREADY SHOWN A DESIRE TO MOVE TOWARD OBTAINING POSITIVE SOVIET COMMITMENTS IN ADVANCE AS TO THE CHARACTER OF PHASE 2 OF THE MBFR NEGOTIATIONS AS THE ALLIES CONCEIVE IT, PARTICULARLY AS REGARDS THE POINT THAT THE SOVIETS SHOULD AGREE THAT PHASE 2 WOULD DEAL WITH AGGREGATES OF NATO AND WARSAW PACT FORCES AND ABSTAIN FROM EFFORTS TO APPLY SUB-CEILINGS TO NATIONAL FORCES SUCH AS THE BUNDESWEHR.

14. IT IS OBVIOUS THAT THE RESULTING BLOCKAGE WOULD NOT SERVE AMERICAN INTERESTS. NOT ONLY WOULD IT PRECLUDE THE POSSIBILITY OF PROGRESS IN THE NEGOTIATIONS IN TERMS OF THE ALLIED NEGOTIATING PROPOSAL, IT WOULD PLACE INCREASING PRESSURE ON THE AFRG TO

AGREE TO REDUCTIONS IN THE FIRST
PHASE, AND WOULD PLACE THE UNITED STATES INCREASINGLY
IN THE MIDDLE BETWEEN THE WESTERN EUROPEANS AND
THE SOVIETS, WITH THE POSSIBILITY OF ACCUSATIONS
OF BAD FAITH FROM BOTH SIDES.

15. WE HAVE SOUGHT TO DAMP DOWN WESTERN EUROPEAN ARDOR
TO TAKE ON THE SOVIETS ON THE WESTERN EUROPEAN
DEFENSE COOPERATION ISSUE WHEN THE TOPIC HAS ARISEN
IN THE AD HOC GROUP. WE BELIEVE SENIOR U.S. OFFICIALS
COULD, IF WESTERN EUROPEAN ALLIES TAKE THE INITIATIVE TO
REARISE THE ISSUE, EXPRESS CONFIDENCE THAT THE OUT-
COME OF MBFR NEGOTIATIONS WOULD BE COMPATIBLE WITH
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MOVES TOWARD INTENSIFIED WESTERN EUROPEAN DEFENSE
EFFORTS, BUT AT THE SAME TIME POINT OUT THE TACTICAL
DISADVANTAGES OF COUNTERPRODUCTIVE OVEREMPHASIS ON EUROPEAN
DEFENSE COOPERATION IN THE VIENNA NEGOTIATIONS.
HOWEVER, STATEMENTS OF THIS KIND ARE LIKELY TO BE INSUFFICIENT
OF THEMSELVES TO DEAL WITH THE MERGING PROBLEM WE
FACE IN THE VIENNA NEGOTIATIONS OF AN INCREASING
FOCUS OF THE MBFR NEGOTIATIONS ON THIS ISSUE. AS
SEEN FROM VIENNA, THE MOST EFFECTIVE SHORT-TERM WAY
OF DEALING WITH THE PROBLEM WOULD APPEAR TO CURTAIL THE
GENERAL DEBATE WHICH SERVES AS A PLATFORM FOR DISCUSSION
OF THE EUROPEAN DEFENSE ISSUE AND TO GET DETAILED NEGOTIATION
STARTED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE ON SOME SPECIFIC SUBJECT
MATTER. THE ISSUE OF SOVIET-U.S. REDUCTIONS WOULD BEST
SERVE THIS OBJECTIVE, ALTHOUGH STABILIZING MEASURES WOULD ALSO BE
A SECOND-BEST POSSIBILITY. ONCE THE VIENNA NEGOTIATORS ARE
INVOLVED IN PRACTICAL DETAILS OF U.S. -SOVIET REDUCTIONS
AND MOVE AWAY FROM PROGRAMMATIC GENERAL ASSERTIONS
ON BOTH SIDES, THE ROLE IN THE MBFR NEGOTIATIONS OF
THE EUROPEAN DEFENSE COOPERATION ISSUE, WHILE OF
CONTINUING IMPORTANCE, WILL NOT BE THE CENTRAL ONE
OF THE NEGOTIATIONS. IN ORDER TO OBTAIN THIS OUT-
COME, THE ALLIES WILL PROBABLY HAVE TO GIVE SOME
ASSURANCES TO THE SOVIETS, AS LIMITED AS POSSIBLE IN
SCOPE, AS TO THE FACT THAT THERE WILL BE A SECOND
PHASE OF NEGOTIATIONS WHICH WILL COVER EUROPEAN FORCES.

16. AN ALTERNATIVE COURSE IS THEORETICALLY POSSIBLE:
IT IS TO WAIT TO SEE WHETHER SOVIET INTEREST IN OB-
TAINING COVERAGE OF WESTERN EUROPEAN FORCES IN THE
MBFR NEGOTIATIONS WILL NOT BRING THEM TO ACCEPT
THE WESTERN CONCEPT OF A TWO-PHASE NEGOTIATION TOWARDS
A COMMON CEILING, WITHOUT ANY FURTHER ASSURANCES
WHATEVER FROM THE NATO ALLIES. THIS APPEARS A RISKY
COURSE OF UNCERTAIN SUCCESS: IT IS MORE LIKELY THAT

THE POSITION OF BOTH SOVIETS AND WEST EUROPEANS WOULD
HARDEN AND THAT THE DIFFICULTY OF WORKING OUT CON-
DITIONS FOR MOVING INTO A SPECIFIC PHASE OF THE
NEGOTIATIONS WHICH WILL SATISFY BOTH SOVIETS AND WEST
EUROPEANS WILL INCREASE, THE LONGER THE GENERAL DEBATE
ON FUTURE WESTERN EUROPEAN DEFENSE COOPERATION IS
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